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Forest Service

Washington, DC

FS-435

Extending Natural Resource Opportunities

The Forest Service in 1988

In past years, the Forest Service sought public involvement in determining how to manage and use the natural resources in its care. In 1988, we sought more active commitment from the public. By encouraging working partnerships with non-Federal organizations and the public, we were able to stretch our budget to accomplish, or exceed, agency goals.

We also embarked on a program to increase our workforce diversity. The cultural context of American society is changing; and to continue to care for America's natural resources in that society, the Forest Service needs to change in the same direction.

Of course, in the midst of these efforts, we still fought wildfires during one of the worst fire seasons in the Nation's history and accomplished the many tasks of our annual workload.

One of the worst fire seasons in history occurred in 1988.

Volunteers from the Steamboat Springs Chamber Resort Association rebuild a trail on the Routt National Forest in Colorado.

Stretching Federal Dollars

In 1988, we launched the National Recreation Strategy to significantly increase outdoor recreational opportunities for the public. To do that in light of budget restraints, we borrowed a successful concept from the wildlife and fish program. We sought partners to help us achieve our goals through contributions in time and money.

The Forest Service put up $500,000 for recreational projects, and the amount was matched with more than $900,000 in contributions from the private sector. In one such project in Colorado, the White River National Forest and four cities and one county cooperated in building a system of hiking trails, the national forest contributing $34,000 and the local governments contributing $84,500.

Another important highlight of the National Recreation Strategy during the year was the creation of the National Forest Scenic Byways System. Scenic driving is the single most popular form of outdoor recreation on the national forests. Since the roads and the scenery are already there, they presented a perfect opportunity to expand a special recreational pursuit.

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EXPERIMENT STATION

1988 Statistics[1]

Receipts	**$1.62 billion**
Expenditures	**$2.69 billion**
Permanent full-time employees	**28,800**
Woodland owners assisted	**167,432**
National Forest System lands burned	**1.2 million acres**
Research publications	**2,227**
Human resource programs	**91,244 persons served**
National Forest System	**191 million acres**
Wilderness	**32.5 million acres**
Road system	**355,700 miles**
Trail system	**106,834 miles**
Recreation use	**242.3 million visitor days**
Timber sold	**11.0 billion board feet**
Grazing permits administered	**13,737**
Wildlife and fish habitat improvements	**154,091 acres**
Livestock grazed	**9.9 million animal unit months**
Mineral cases processed	**25,932**
Insect and disease suppression	**1.7 million acres**
Reforestation	**416.1 thousand acres**
Timber harvested	**12.6 billion board feet**
National Wild and Scenic Rivers System	**3,331 miles**
National Scenic Byways	**560 miles**
Watershed improvements	**11,505 acres**

[1] Throughout this publication, 1988 refers to the fiscal year from October 1, 1987, to September 30, 1988.

In 1988, we designated 10 scenic byways rolling through 560 miles of Arizona, California, Kentucky, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. They offer a spectrum of typical forest settings ranging from dense rain forests to northern hardwoods, to mountain tundra and alpine forests. In the coming year, we will add more scenic byways to the system.

The Forest Service also expanded partnerships with fish and wildlife organizations, building on our successes in 1987. Congress authorized $2 million in 1988 for the fish and wildlife challenge cost-share program. About 430 partners turned that into an investment of more than $4 million through their efforts.

Private partnerships may be a new concept, but we have always worked with State fish and wildlife agencies to maintain ecosystem diversity and productivity. For instance, a cooperative effort with George Washington National Forest and Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries personnel introduced 12 peregrine falcons into the forest in 1988. The species had vanished from the Shenandoah Valley in the early 1950's.

Timber harvest on the national forests was 12.6 billion board feet, the second highest in history. We published the first report from the Timber Sale Program Information Reporting System (TSPIRS), which showed that receipts from the timber sale program exceeded costs by over $500 million. Every national forest is represented in the report. TSPIRS provides the financial, economic, employment, income, and program-level perspectives that are important in assessing a forest's annual sale program. The information will be used to make adjustments in timber sale programs on the national forests and to give a better overall picture of the Forest Service's timber sale program.

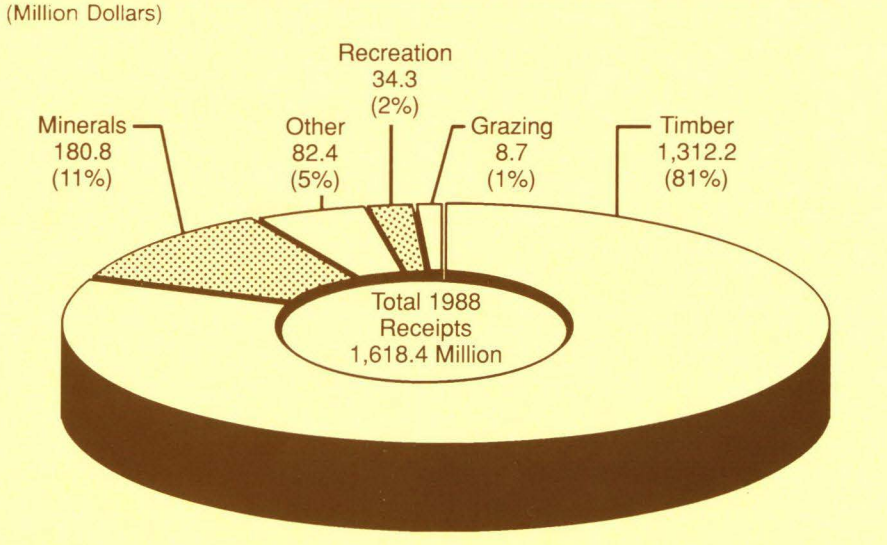
Working Toward Diversity

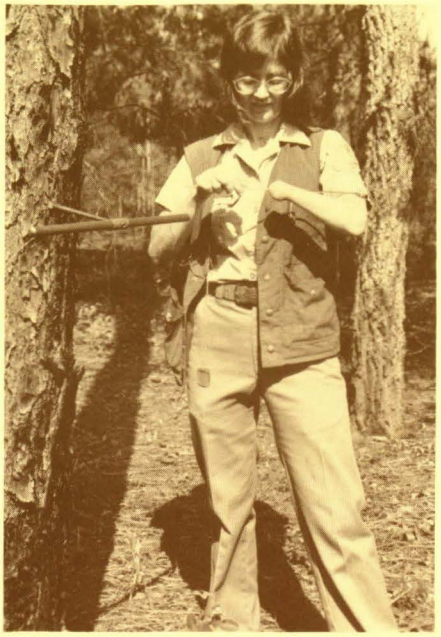
The agency also took a new look at its human resources. One of the most significant programs that surfaced in 1988 deals with workforce diversity in the Forest Service. An initiative called "Workforce 1995" is our push toward creating a workforce at all levels of the agency as diverse as the communities we work in across the country. We want an organizational culture that is receptive and adaptive to changing values and roles. "Workforce 1995" will help achieve that goal because it focuses on attracting women and minorities to natural resource management.

Currently, women comprise 34 percent of the permanent workforce, and minorities comprise 13 percent. The agency also made special efforts in 1988 to advance women and minorities into key management positions.

An example of our diversity effort is an agreement with North Carolina Agricultural & Technical University to encourage minorities and women to participate in the Forest Service's volunteer program and to pursue education that will lead to careers in managing the Nation's natural resouces. Among the activities is a plan to make minority students more aware of

Distribution of Receipts by Program





"Workforce 1995" is a significant initiative to increase diversity in the Forest Service workforce.

the challenges and opportunities available to them in the field of natural resource management and to encourage them to pursue their interests professionally.

Fighting Fires

Following a bad fire year in 1987, we again experienced one of the worst fire seasons ever in 1988. Drought conditions for the third consecutive year created extremely high fire potential throughout the Western United States. Over 5 million acres burned during 72,750 wildfires; approximately 1.2 million acres burned on National Forest System land. In the spotlight this fire season were Yellowstone National Park and the six national forests adjacent to it.

The Forest Service spent $413 million for firefighting. Cost estimates of natural resource damage on National Forest System land totaled an additional $65 to $70 million. Because of the severity of the situation, we appointed a national team to assess the damage and coordinate rehabilitation activities for the affected areas.

More than 41 emergency fire assessments were completed in 1988, with over $6 million approved for emergency recovery efforts. The public's concern over burned areas also led to donations of money and time for rehabilitation work.

In addition, the Secretaries of the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture established a Fire Management Policy Review Team. The team was assigned to review national policies and their application for fire management in national parks and wilderness and to recommend actions to address the problems experienced during the 1988 fire season.

Expanding Product Markets

We also tried cost-sharing in State and Private Forestry. In 1988, Congress appropriated $1 million for 50 specific projects aimed at improving domestic and export markets for wood. Cost-sharing of marketing projects by local sponsors more than doubled the Federal expenditures and helped focus on high-priority areas.

One of the projects approved under this program is a development called "Washington Village," cosponsored by several states in the West and by wood products associations. The idea is to erect an entire village in Kobe, Japan, using U.S. construction techniques to promote the use of U.S. home designs and wood products in the Japanese home building industry.

A glow lingers moments after fire raced through.

Heavy smoke columns from the North Fork Fire set an ominous backdrop to the community of West Yellowstone, Montana.

Another $1 million was appropriated for the Utilization and Marketing program to provide technical assistance to help timber-dependent communities improve their economic conditions by strengthening the competitiveness of the forest products industry in their communities.

Researching Environmental Effects

Research toward a better understanding of fire and its effects has always been a priority of the Forest Service. One of the 1988 accomplishments in that area is the Fire Effects Information System (FEIS), a computerized data base designed to find out how fire affects nearly 200 plant species and a dozen animal species in the West. This system documents how both wildfire and prescribed burning alter species distribution and characteristics and change resouce values. FEIS was developed jointly by the Intermountain Research Station, the University of Montana, the Bureau of Land Management, and the National Park Service.

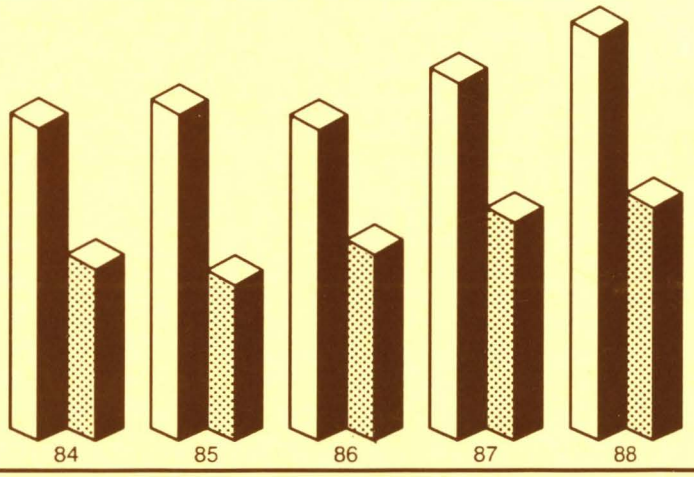
Another priority research area concerned forest health. Studies have shown a decline in some tree species. For example, acid rain is suspected as one of the causes of red spruce growth decline and premature death in the Northeast. Reseachers at the Northeastern Forest Experiment Station have found that calcium uptake from forest soils—an essential part of plant growth—is blocked when acid rain frees up excess aluminum in the soil. When trees produce less new sapwood, they become stressed and are unable to handle invasions of disease and insect pests. A better understanding of how trees are made vulnerable by such mineral imbalances can help us relate overall tree health to causes such as acid rain, as well as to forest management practices.

We added 29 Research Natural Areas (RNA) in 1988, bringing the total to 191 since the program began in 1927. RNA's are part of a national network of field ecological areas set aside for research and education and for maintaining biological diversity on National Forest System lands. They are pristine examples of areas that typify important forest, shrubland, grassland, alpine, aquatic, geological, and similar natural situations having special characteristics of scientific importance and interest.

Heading Toward the Next Decade

Every year, as in 1988, the Forest Service builds upon its past endeavors and tailors new efforts toward future expectations in society and in natural resource management. We look forward to increasing our partnerships with the American public and to matching the diversity of the Forest Service with the diversity of society.

Expenditures and Receipts



(Million Dollars)

	84	85	86	87	88
Expenditures	2,095	2,199	2,078	2,351	2,693
Receipts	1,184	1,133	1,321	1,458	1,618
Receipts as Percent of Expenditures	56.5%	51.5%	63.5%	62.0%	60.0%

The Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, is responsible for Federal leadership in forestry. The agency carries out this role through four main activities:

- Protection and management of resources on 191 million acres of National Forest System lands.
- Cooperation with State and local governments, forest industries, and private landowners to help protect and manage non-Federal forest and associated range and watershed lands.
- Research on all aspects of forestry, rangeland management, and forest resource utilization.
- Participation with other agencies in human resource and community assistance programs to improve living conditions in rural areas.

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